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RUEHAT/AMCONSUL AMSTERDAM 2047

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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
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STATE FOR OES/ETC Rowena Watson

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SENV](#) [ETRD](#) [KSQA](#) [NL](#)

SUBJECT: DUTCH TO PROPOSE MINISTERIAL IN CONJUNCTION WITH CITES COP
14

REF: STATE 00713

¶1. (SBU) Summary. Emboff asked Stefan Verbunt, CITES Management Authority for the Netherlands, and Senior Executive Officer with the Department of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, about Dutch plans to propose a ministerial meeting prior to the CITES COP 14, which will be held in The Hague in June. Verbunt stated that the Dutch intend to invite CITES representatives to a ministerial-level meeting on June 13 to discuss improving the implementation of CITES and the enforcement of trade in "high commercial demand" wildlife, particularly timber and marine species. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) Verbunt indicated that the GONL wants to discuss ways to improve the protection of species in high commercial demand through further implementation of CITES. He added that while CITES' regulatory system has effectively helped combat worldwide biodiversity loss, the treaty is often not considered to be important in regard to species that are at the center of large global trade chains, citing timber and certain marine wildlife as examples of high commercial demand species. Verbunt provided Emboff a written summary of the proposal for the Ministerial meeting, which indicates the objective is to send a "clear international political signal that CITES can and should play a more important role when it comes to realizing the international goal of stopping the loss in biodiversity by also focusing on species that are in high commercial demand."

¶3. (SBU) The written summary indicates that the GONL will also propose listing species for protection under CITES while they may still be relatively abundant, but demonstrate a clear and rapid decline in population or numbers. As Verbunt put it, the GONL wants to discuss using CITES to protect species before they have become "economically extinct." He went on to state that governments should protect species not only for biological reasons (preventing biodiversity loss) but also for economic reasons (trading them on a sustainable basis). He said that in proposing a more active role for CITES, the Dutch do not wish to make CITES a barrier to trade, but rather an instrument for sustainable trade.

¶4. (SBU) Verbunt said the GONL considers CITES to be one of the most powerful and successful global treaties in force. Verbunt noted that the licensing system enforced by CITES effectively controls trade in endangered species, and that no species listed for protection under CITES have gone extinct. The GONL would like further actions to protect wildlife to be taken through CITES because substantial media and public interest in CITES will ensure that such actions will be matched by political will to enforce those actions.

¶5. (SBU) Emboff also contacted the MFA about the proposed

ministerial. MFA officials indicated that the Agriculture Ministry is the CITES Management Authority in the Netherlands, and provided no further insight into the ministerial meeting's agenda.

Blakeman